

May 15, 2015

The following was sent to the KYAE list-serv.

Week 2 Message



Those who take the GED® test are passing the GED® test.

Kentucky has one of the highest pass rates in the nation on the 2014 GED® test. We should be proud of this and be confident in our students' abilities to rise to the challenge of the new test.

Kentucky is one of only three states with a pass rate over 80%, outpacing the national pass rate of 63%. We recognize that one of the reasons for Kentucky's high pass rate is the Kentucky requirement that students pass the Ready™ test before proceeding to the GED® test. Our friends in Arkansas also have the Ready™ test requirement and have a pass rate similar to ours.

However, **our students are also doing well on the Ready™ test.** With the exception of math, (which is a national problem, not just a Kentucky problem), most Kentucky students are scoring "likely to pass" on the Ready™ test. The average Ready™ test scores in Kentucky are 158 for RLA, 155 for science, 157 for social studies, and 151 for math.

For math, an academic weakness we also encountered with the 2002 version of the GED® test, 37% score "likely to pass," 41% score "too close to call" (which includes the passing scores of 150-153), and 22% score in the "not likely to pass" category.

There is no magic bullet or instructional shortcut for the 2014 GED® test. Instructors must adapt their instructional content and strategies to address the new test, which is based on the state standards of which we have been learning about and incorporating for the past couple of years. We can't expect to prepare students adequately for an updated test if we do not adjust instruction.

Here are a few tips to address some common misconceptions:

- **Advise students to avoid using the word "I" when responding to an extended writing response item.** While "I" is not an automatic fail, its use often signals that the student is offering an opinion rather than using evidence to support an argument. The extended writing response is no longer an opinion piece on a general topic; it requires an evidence-based, thoughtful writing response. The only way to guarantee an automatic fail on this section is to neglect to write anything.
- Extended Response items on the 2014 GED® Social Studies test come from the civics and government domain and are focused on the theme "Development of Modern

Liberties and Democracy.” **The “enduring issues” addressed by the test are no secret; they fall into four categories:**

1. Citizens’ rights in conflict with some other societal interest (also described as individual rights versus societal well-being)
2. Separation of powers
3. Checks and balances
4. States’ rights versus federal power

Have confidence in your students and exude that confidence during the instructional process. **Boldly administer the Ready™ test, provide instructional content that addresses the new test and send students on to the GED® test. Kentucky students have demonstrated that, with your help, they can be successful!**

If you have additional questions, contact Rae Smith at rae.smith@ky.gov.

WANT TO KNOW WHAT THIS IS ABOUT? Find out about the May Messages Learn & Win Challenge here: <http://kya.ky.gov/educators/maymessages.htm>.